

REMARKS

Claims 20-38 are pending and stand rejected as being unpatentable over Civanlar in view of Blackett.

By way of this amendment, amendments have been provided to clarify that the firewall device as claimed is a multi-homing device by virtue of having sets of virtual hosts. The claims have been amended to indicate that each of the individual virtual hosts provide a “distinct home through which a connection may be made,” thereby enabling the gateway device to be a load sharing multi-homing firewall device.

According to the Specification, the table in Column 6 of the parent case (USP 5,898,830) defines multi-homing using virtual hosts as:

Multi-homing: Multiple virtual hosts running on a single physical machine, using multiple network addresses on a single network interface. A virtual host assumes the identity of one of multiple, independently-configurable "homes" to handle a particular connection at a particular time.

Thus, the present invention as claimed defines a load-sharing firewall device that can load share among multiple addresses simultaneously.

As will be appreciated, the ability to load share in such a fashion represents is a distinct advantage over the prior art, especially at the time of the filing of the parent application in 1996. As the references of record are single home devices and cannot host multiple homes as presently claimed, it is respectfully submitted that the independent claims are allowable for this reason alone.

Additionally, amendments have been provided to clarify the operation of the HTML-based configurator. The claims now recite that the web configurator is capable of configuring the configuration files of the virtual hosts through an HTML-based point-and-click interface, such as any standard web browser. Thus, the firewall as presently

claimed provides for a point-and-click interface that allows a user to remotely configure the settings of a specific home selected from all of the homes of the firewall.

The ability to perform this type of configuration using a web browser represents a significant advantage over the prior art as of 1996, especially in terms of ease-of-use and cross-platform compatibility. As the cited art of record does not provide for configuration in this manner, it is respectfully submitted that the independent claims are allowable over the art of record.

It is respectfully submitted that neither Civanlar nor Blackett, separately or in combination, teach or suggest the limitations of the claims as currently presented. It is respectfully requested that the instant application be reconsidered in view of the Amendment and Remarks contained herein and the instant case be allowed.

If the Examiner has any questions regarding this application or this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at 775-848-5624.

Respectfully submitted,  
SIERRA PATENT GROUP, LTD.

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